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"... *IT IS MANIFEST THAT MR. LONG HAS BEEN A KEEN OBSERVER AND A TRUTHFUL RECORDER, AND THAT MR. BURROUGHS PASSED THE BOUNDS OF COURTESY AND TRUE CRITICISM IN DENOUNCING THE WRITINGS OF A YOUNGER MAN SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY CONTAINED THE RECORD OF FACTS AND IMPRESSIONS WHICH HAD NEVER COME TO HIS PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE.*"—From the *Boston Transcript*, May 20, 1903.

WILLIAM J. LONG AND HIS BOOKS

A PAMPHLET CONSISTING CHIEFLY OF TYPICAL LETTERS AND REVIEWS IN REPLY TO MR. BURROUGHS' UNWARRANTED ATTACK ON MR. LONG

GINN & COMPANY PUBLISHERS

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Typical Letters and Reviews

in reply to

Mr. Burroughs' Unwarranted Attack on Mr. Long

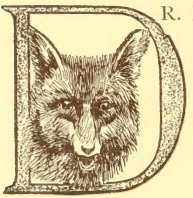
The Gist of Mr. Burroughs' Attack

"MR. LONG'S book reads like that of a man who has really never been to the woods, but who sits in his study and cooks up these yarns from things he has read in *Forest and Stream*, or in other sporting journals. Of real observation there is hardly a vestige in his book; of deliberate trifling with natural history there is no end. . . . Why should any one palm off such stuff on an unsuspecting public as veritable natural history? When a man, writing or speaking of his own experience, says without qualification that he has seen a thing, we are expected to take him at his word. Mr. Long says his sketches were made in the woods, with the subjects themselves living just outside his tent door, and that they are all life studies and include also some of the unusual life secrets of a score of animals and birds. . . . What the 'life secrets' are that he claims to have discovered, any competent

reader can see. They are all the inventions of Mr. Long. Of the real secrets of wild life, I do not find a trace in his volume."—From "Real and Sham Natural History," the *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1903.

CHARACTERISTIC REPLIES TO MR. BURROUGHS

From *The Connecticut Magazine*, Vol. VIII, No. 1, Series of 1903



R. LONG, who for many years has been a quiet and patient observer of animals in their native wilds, has of late given us some delightful books that profess to record these observations. Mr. Burroughs denies these observations categorically; calls them inventions, on the sole ground that he is himself an observer and has not seen these things; and condemns Mr. Long for perpetrating a fraud on an innocent public.

This is a personal question between two writers; the personal element must therefore enter into the discussion of it. Dr. Long is, by reputation and by the testimony of all who know him, a gentleman of honor and integrity. His life has been one long search for the verities. At eighteen years he made the sacrifice that few can measure, of giving up home, friends, money, position, to follow what seemed to him the truth. He

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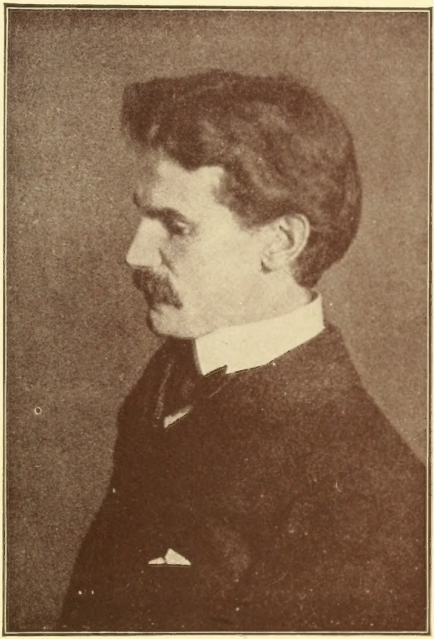


Mr. William J. Long

From "Who's Who in America"

LONG, WILLIAM JOSEPH. Born, North Attleboro, Mass., April 3, 1867. Graduated, Bridgewater (Massachusetts) State Normal School, 1887; Harvard, 1892; Andover Theological Seminary, 1895; Ph.D., Heidelberg, 1897. Made notable defense of ministerial liberty at Cambridge (Massachusetts Council), 1898. Author of "The Making of Zimri Bunker," 1898; "Ways of Wood Folk," 1899; "Wilderness Ways," 1900; "Beasts of the Field," 1901; "Fowls of the Air," 1901. Has contributed various poems, stories, and articles in many magazines.

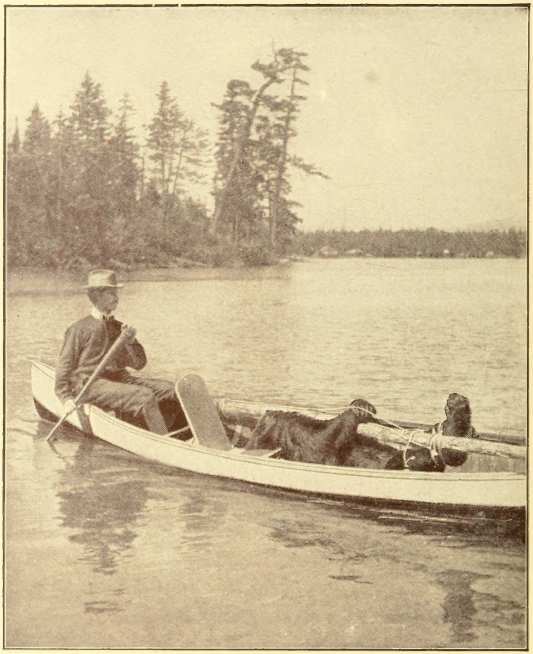
is a scholar, a graduate of Bridgewater Normal School; of Harvard University; of Andover Theological Seminary; of Heidelberg University, where he took the degrees of A.M. and Ph.D.; and a student also of the Universities of Paris and Rome. He speaks four or five languages, reads as many more, and his specialties are philosophy and history. The study of nature and animal life is to him purely a recreation in a life of constant hard work; and it must be admitted that he brings to this study a rare training. If his observations are unusual, so also are his qualifications and opportunities. **For over twenty years he has spent part of each season, summer or winter, deep in the woods. Sometimes he has lived in the wilderness alone for months at a time; again he follows his animals with Indian hunters whose whole lives have been studies of the natural and animal worlds.**

Mr. Burroughs, who denies Dr. Long's observations, has spent his life largely on the farm. Of the great wilderness and of the animals among whom Dr. Long is most at home, he has until recently had no direct knowledge or personal experience. His observations of the smaller animals and birds of the farm are accurate and excellent; but there is absolutely nothing in these observations to preclude the possibility or even the probability of those recorded by Dr. Long. It is passing the bounds of criticism, as well as of reason, to say that what one observer sees on his farm in New York must limit what another observer may see in the Maine wilderness — especially when one remembers the fact that is emphasized by most modern observers, namely, the individuality of every animal of the higher orders, which gives him habits more or less different from every other individual of the same species.

From *Our Animal Friends*, August, 1903

WHEN Mr. John Burroughs writes of something that he knows, Mr. Burroughs writes instructively and delightfully, — so charmingly indeed that it is a thousand pities he should ever write about things of which he knows a good deal less than he fancies. Mr. Burroughs is a gentleman who started life under heavy educational disadvantages which it has been his great merit to overcome to a considerable extent. He has acquired, for example, a correct and even graceful style of writing English, though it is not free from curious solecisms; but when he sets himself up as a critical appraiser of "literary values," his judgments are worth just as much and just as little as those of any other man of like attainments. Just so, when Mr. John Burroughs tells what he himself has seen in his observations of nature, he easily commands the attention of his readers, and no one thinks of doubting his veracity; but when Mr. Burroughs undertakes to ridicule the observations of other men not less veracious than himself, and gives no better reason for his rude denials than that John Burroughs does not happen to have seen the same things, then the reasoning of John Burroughs is ridiculous and his attacks on other men are indecent. . . .

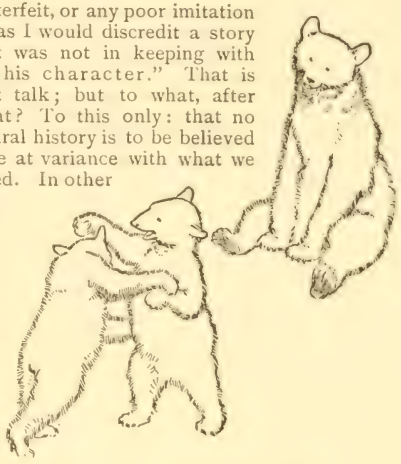
. . . It is only fair, however, to quote what Mr. Burroughs himself says on this point: "If it be urged that I discredit Mr. Long's stories simply because I myself have never seen or known the like, I say no; that is not the reason. I can believe many things I have never seen or known. I discredit them because they are so widely at variance with all we know"— that is, all that Mr. Burroughs knows — "of the wild creatures and their ways. I discredit them as I do any



Mr. Long bringing home a captured bear. [From a photograph.]

It has been Mr. Long's habit, for many years, to spend a part of each season deep in the woods — sometimes alone, at other times with Indian hunters. Recently he has been exploring exhaustively the unknown interiors of Newfoundland with the special purpose of studying a species of gray wolf which has never been described.

other glaring counterfeit, or any poor imitation of an original, or as I would discredit a story of my friend that was not in keeping with what I knew of his character." That is pretty extravagant talk; but to what, after all, does it amount? To this only: that no observation in natural history is to be believed if it happens to be at variance with what we have already learned. In other words, according to Mr. Burroughs' amazing conception of science, nothing in nature is to be believed unless we know it already!



We have no doubt that Mr. Burroughs will discover that his savage attack on Mr. Long has left Mr. Long uninjured, while it has done himself some damage in the estimation of men whose good opinion is worth having; and we sincerely regret that he should have fallen into so unpleasant a blunder.

From *The Ypsilantian*, July 16, 1903

TEACHERS of nature study who read in the *Atlantic Monthly* Mr. John Burroughs' sweeping and somewhat dogmatic criticism of the animal studies of Mr. Ernest Thompson Seton, Rev. W. J. Long, and others, must have felt there was a good deal to be said on the other side. Indeed, Mr. Long has already said something in the *North American Review*, and Mr. Seton will probably take care of his end of the controversy when occasion calls for it. For Mr. Burroughs, delightful essayist and out-of-doors companion as he is, is by no means infallible as a

naturalist, nor has he learned, from modern laboratory methods, not to cover with some general term like "instinct" a field of activities which promises large results to the really scientific investigation.

It is not so very many years since he took James Russell Lowell to task, in *Scribner's Monthly*, for representing dandelions and buttercups as blooming together, and his tone was quite as positive and as self-assured as in his recent critique. Yet the poet was the better naturalist of the two, for he knew about the species known as the "early buttercups," while Mr. Burroughs, with surprising provincialism, seemed to suppose that the term "buttercups" was limited to *Ranunculus acris*, a summer-blooming species. **Mr. Burroughs seems to ignore the limitations of negative testimony, and even his admirers must admit that his contemptuous and sweeping denial of the conclusions of other observers who differ with him, and especially his insinuations as to their accuracy and veracity, are neither scientific nor, to put it mildly, exactly nice.**

From *The New England Journal of Education,*

June 18, 1903

MR. LONG has promptly and completely won a place in the hearts of the people. Wild animals, among whom he lived by the month, loved and trusted him, but no more than the humans for whom he wrote. From Thoreau to Burroughs there has been no man quite so lovable to wild animals and to men at the same time as William J. Long. His experiences are well-nigh as fascinating in their way as were the songs of Jenny Lind.

But Mr. Long and his admirers had a rude awakening. There has been nothing quite so startling, almost

shocking, as the *Atlantic* article by John Burroughs, in which he dealt with Mr. Long and other modern nature students cruelly. We have had our time of swinging in the hammock and absorbing nature and human nature from "Wake Robin" and "Pepacton," "Riverby" and "Signs and Seasons." I recall especially with what delight I read his "Bird Courtship" and similar revelations of the things he could see that I could not. John Burroughs had become a saint along with Emerson and Thoreau, only he was not translated.

No one who has not made a saint of Burroughs, and has not been in love with William J. Long, can appreciate the nightmare effect of that *Atlantic* article.

In this happy phrase Mr. Long recalled his lovers to his side: ". . . in this tempest of which I was the unwitting cause, and of which I am the wondering and unwilling center." After that suggestion of the effect of the shock upon himself, we had a keen appetite for a new book from his pen. And the title! just the one we wanted, just the one that showed that he was not in the least cowed or soured by the experience,—"Wood Folk at School!"

There is now no spell of sentiment. The bloom has gone, and it is the comradeship of confidence and respect, the ruddy glow of health.

What is it in William J. Long that can stand such an attack from a great master? It is the genius, unapproached by any other popular writer, by which he weaves the individuality and instinct of wild animals without sacrificing either to the other. No other has developed such power to make instinct and individuality the warp and woof of a perfect design. . . . **William J. Long is the one student of nature whose reverence for animal instinct never deserts him, and with whom it never dims the eye to every charming personal trait.** A deer is always true to his inheritance, and yet no deer was ever just like any other, any more than any two beautiful women or noble men are ever alike.

One of Mr. Long's camps in the Maine Woods. [From a photograph.]

I have taken an afternoon off, reading once more "The Idyl of the Honey Bee," "The Invitation," "The Tragedies of the Nests," and "Glimpses of Wild Life," that I might make sure that I still loved John Burroughs, and then I read "Wood Folk at School." You try it sometime. Read Burroughs at his best for an hour or two, and then read William J. Long, and you will understand why Burroughs cannot read William J. Long with any patience, and you will not love either the less, and you will surely appreciate the matchless insight of Mr. Long into the lives of wood folk.

APPRECIATIONS OF MR. LONG AND HIS WORK

From *The Boston Transcript*

THE WORK OF WILLIAM J. LONG

BY RICHARD BURTON

HE nature and animal sketches of William J. Long have a worthy part in a tendency of recent literature which is at once welcome and significant. The beast epic, so called of scholars, has a long and honorable lineage in prose and poetry. Ever since Æsop — and indeed before that Eastern masterpiece got itself into print — the animal had a place in the imaginative depiction of life in letters, and has been used for purposes of instruction quite as much as for the amusement to be derived from such a piquant motif. Reynard the Fox — the German Reinecke Fuchs — may be mentioned as a type of the treatment of the beast in allegory by the older writers; and in the hands of masters like La Fontaine or Goethe, our older brothers the beasts have become an integral and well-loved section of folklore and later poetry. The naïve handling of this sympathetic subject in our day by Joel Chandler Harris, whose "Br'er Rabbit" is so dear to the properly reared modern child, is the outgrowth of a vast amount of literature like to it, at least, in respect that the animals are the persons of the play instead of human beings.

But with the incoming of the scientific age and the general acceptance of the principle of evolution to explain the progressive manifestations of life upon the broad surface of Mother Earth, — as well as in the vital air and under the waves of Father Ocean, — there has naturally come a changed attitude toward the animal existence below and before man in the great story of biologic development. Man has drawn closer to brute

A small reproduction of a full-page illustration by Mr. Charles Copeland in Mr. Long's latest book, "A Little Brother to the Bear."

life in sympathy and love, realizing the ties that bound him to these humble, elder folk of God; a fellow feeling has made him wondrous kind. Hence he has fallen into the habit of speaking of his "little brothers of the air and field," and, led both by the instinct for knowledge — the true scientific curiosity — and the impulse of interested affection, he has studied his animals as they were never studied before; and so has come to be familiar not alone with their manner of life, their nature, habits, and meaning in a universe of sentient things, but has even tried, with some success, to put himself in their place, to look at life — their precious birthright along with ours — through their own eyes. This is the head mark of the modern and most recent interpretation of animal nature at the hands of the group of writers who have done so much to make popular this fascinating field of letters.

A great impulse toward this study in literary interpretation indubitably came from Kipling by his famous Jungle books and later studies of animal life. He set the seal of his genius upon this endeavor, carrying on the older idea of the beast epic with this striking shift in view point: the beast speaks for his own side and treats man critically, just as man has so long been treating the beasts. There is thus added an immense ethical meaning in the Jungle tales. If allegories, they are allegorical in a new, deeper, and finer sense than ever was Æsop. Various writers have, each according to his particular interest, taking the cue from Kipling, made their contributions to this most stimulating theme. Thompson Seton has delighted thousands by his combination of picture and text. Birdlore has been brought into our homes by Burroughs and a vigorous band of followers. And later, poet naturalists like Charles G. D. Roberts have added their quota to the wholesome whole. In verse, Bliss Carman's lyric appeal is largely that of nature conceived as responsive

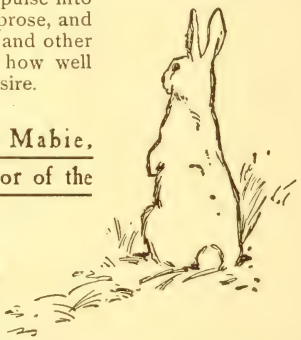
and close akin to man, and this lends a certain attractive atmosphere of glamour and mysticism to his song. A writer of spiritual import, like Dr. Van Dyke, has now and again in essay or short story shown a beautiful sympathy for this aspect of the breathing world of nature.

The time was ripe for a public reception of this sort of literature, and its recognition was correspondingly quick and hearty. Looking with a careful eye upon American literature of the present moment, it can be said with little fear of cavil that no tendency is more indicative of the time spirit; none offers a more hopeful sign of both present and future than this of the spreading of nature study, animate and inanimate. It is a noble part of that slow widening of the interests and sympathies of man which Tennyson dreamed of in one of his most splendid poems.

The share of William J. Long in all this deserves most cordial recognition. In the first place, he is a true naturalist, a scientist in quest of knowledge. Year after year he fares to the northern streams and forests to study animals in their haunts and habitats, and in such books as "Fowls of the Air," "Beasts of the Field," and the just issued "School of the Woods," a trilogy of volumes in which his distinctive work has been gathered, he has given to the world the result of his long and loving observation. Not for an instant is he a sentimentalist; his purpose is not to make a pretty story. Some, to whom the weasel of song and story, for example, is a graceful, charming creature, may be pained by his chapter on "Kagax the Bloodthirsty," wherein that incredible little butcher is limned in his true light and color. Yet that essay, sternly insistent on fact as it is, nevertheless is a prose idyl, the work

of a poet; all the fear, tragedy, and depredation of the wood are imaginatively set forth with the touch of a true romanticist. One is enlarged in soul by reading it. Dr. Long is just as surely poet as scientist.

He gives the animals he describes their quaint Indian names, and his love for them throbs through every line and picture. He sees them sympathetically as well as analytically, and constantly reveals his sense of beauty by his description of "that great good place, outdoors," in which they move and have their being. He tells it all in a style admirable for simplicity, lack of strain or strut, picturesqueness, and artistic restraint. A quiet and most enjoyable humor plays through his writings, furnishing foil and relief. A sense of the dramatic, too, is present when occasion calls. At times he prefers to put a poetic impulse into verse form instead of prose, and readers of *The Outlook* and other periodicals are aware how well he carries out this desire.



Hamilton Wright Mabie,

Associate Editor of the *Outlook*

MR. WILLIAM J. LONG is a lover of wild life whose reports of what goes on in earth and air are fresh, vital, and picturesque. He has evidently been abroad at all hours and has surprised beasts and birds in their most unguarded moments. In "Fowls of the Air" and "Beasts of the Field" the out-of-doors world seems to live in all its multiform

and hidden activities. Mr. Long has a fresh, sincere style, an eager curiosity, and a trained habit of observation, and he writes with unaffected skill.

From *The Christian Register*, Boston, Mass., December 28, 1899

MR. LONG believes in the individuality of the wild creatures. He tells of asking a little child once how she knew her own little chicken from twenty others in the flock just like him. "How do I know my chicken? Why, I know him by his little face!" And, sure enough, the face was quite different. So Mr. Long's advice is, no matter how well you know the ways of crows, for instance, to watch the first that comes in your way quite as if he were an entire stranger; and you will surely find some new thing, some unrecorded way, to give you fresh interest in them. This eager spirit of the investigator goes through all the chapters.

William Lyon Phelps, Professor of English Literature in Yale University

I HAVE read Mr. Long's books with close attention, and they seem to me remarkable productions. His powers of observation are extraordinary; the simplicity of his style exhibits artistic powers of a high order; and his sympathy with animals is shown in a beautiful way. From the point of view of natural history, as well as that of literary art, these books are masterpieces.

From *The New York Tribune*

WE know of no other student of animal life who has shown for the creatures of the forest such loving sympathy, such intuitive appreciation of

their characters, customs, and instincts. He is the friend of beast and bird and his methods of observation are as gentle as they are searching; he has, moreover, that spirit of patient reverence, that ardent interest without which the scientific investigator is a mere Dryasdust.

From *The Boston Herald*, August 9, 1903

STEALING away to watch the things that lived in the woods formed the supreme delight of Dr. Long's childhood, and before he was twenty he had filled a dozen notebooks with curious, hitherto unrecorded habits of animals, — not with any intention of future use, however, or of writing on nature, for he was, and is still, intent upon books of an entirely different order. But while at Andover the crass ignorance of certain nature articles aroused his determination to write something on animals which should simply tell the truth.

He prepared five articles, largely in fun, which, to his surprise, found ready acceptance and yielded a check of astounding proportions. Requests for book material followed, which he has since supplied at the rate of one or two books a year.

Dr. Long is nature's true lover before he is her historian. He never seeks exact facts, never studies consciously. As he puts it, "I just love her, give myself wholly to her influence, expect nothing — then she gives everything." All his studies are made from life. In summer, and frequently in winter, he goes deep into the wilderness of Maine or of Canada, generally in Newfoundland, where he follows the animals continually, to see how they live and what they do. Often he

prowls all night, or lies in his canoe, or uses his "jack" on dark nights, just as he did when a boy, from pure love.

The distinct individuality of each bird or beast forms the basis of all his work. He never describes them in classes, simply because no two are alike. . . .

Dr. Long's hardest work comes in the verification of his own discoveries, for he is the most conscientious of writers, positively refusing to write an observation until he has confirmed it by records of other naturalists, or by reliable testimony. As a result, his notebooks contain descriptions of hundreds of rare animal habits that he has seen but never written about, simply because of his inability to find other naturalists or woodsmen who have witnessed the same thing.

Sara A. Hubbard in *The Dial*,
September 16, 1901

WHAT is there of promise in a boy who idles away all the time he can steal from home and books and healthful play to sit like a stock or a stone for hours together watching the strange ways of the frogs and the ducks, the otter and the musquash, that haunt the brook or the lake and hide their life from all but the most patient of prying eyes; or who wanders through the woods and remote by-places to come silently upon the wild folk dwelling there and win them to friendly confidence or startle them into a betrayal of their best kept secrets? What profit is there in a man who spends weeks of winter and summer in the heart of the wilderness, alone with his rod and gun, an Indian guide at hand for camp service and timely help at need, but living under a separate roof, while the hunter paddles his bark canoe on solitary waters or travels on snowshoes

weary miles in the track of the moose, the deer, and the caribou? Open one of the little books that have been recently produced by Mr. William J. Long, and you will find a gracious answer to these questions. There are three of these books, cheap in price and unpretentious, yet neat and attractive in every detail. First comes "Ways of Wood Folk," then "Wilderness Ways," and lastly "Secrets of the Woods." More charming entertainment for readers of varied tastes has seldom been provided within book covers.

The author has made wonderful use of his opportunities for nature study. One would suppose from his intimate knowledge of birds and beasts that his whole time must have been given to a study of them. But he is college bred; this we learn from indirect statements. That he is a man of fine culture, his style attests. It is flowing, graceful, and well suited to convey the stores of curious information with which his books abound. . . .

Much has been made of Thoreau's intimacy with wild animals, but his experience pales in comparison with that related by Mr. Long. With as keen a fondness for nature as Thoreau possessed, this later investigator has a tenderer feeling for his own and for inferior races, which gains our regard as it does that of the secluded, suspicious tenants of the wilderness. He stops and studies until he understands them, and they respond trustfully to his tactful sympathy. . . .

It is a service to the public to present books of such high quality in such inexpensive form as these. They are educational in a high sense; and it is a

pleasure to know that more of them may be looked for from the same genial hand.

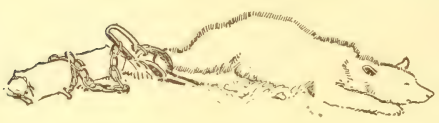
From *Our Animal Friends*, August, 1901

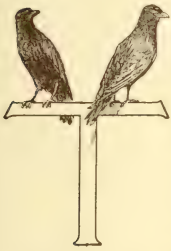
WE are heartily glad to welcome a book on natural history which tries to tell the truth, and not to cover it up with a mass of mawkish sentimentalism. A great many goody-goody books of the natural history kind have been published lately, and they have been doing a considerable amount of harm by making the impression that the love of animals is not a rational sentiment, but is founded, to a large extent, on silly pretense. There is any amount of harm in the making of that impression. All animals are not lovely either in form or in any other respect. The hippopotamus, for example, is certainly not a beauty; the skunk is not a desirable neighbor; the weasel is the most ferocious, bloodthirsty, and wastefully murderous little wretch that ever slew its own kin, murdered a score of domestic fowls in a hencoop, or throttled as many more brooding birds, all in the course of a single night's amusement. You may not love the owl nor care to make a pet of him, but you are ready to forgive his faults when you learn that he has dined upon a weasel. The most foolish thing that can be done, and it has been done extensively of late, is to try to invest wild animals with all the virtues of a lofty human civilization. The love of a human mother is a lifelong principle as well as an instinctive affection; the love of a bear, or a fox, or a weasel for its young is purely instinctive, and as soon as the young are able to go alone, the wild parents drive them mercilessly away, never again to recognize them as their offspring. Since that is the fact, it is worse than folly to teach children the contrary. Children ought to be taught nothing but the truth; and they ought to be taught the lesson of mercy to animals, wild and tame, not because of fictitious virtues which those poor creatures cannot have, but just because they are poor creatures

to whom mankind owes a duty of humanity. Mr. Long knows wild animals with personal acquaintance, and he writes about them as he personally knows them, not as sentimentalists misrepresent them.

From *The School World*, London, England, February, 1900

IT is a gratifying sign of the times that both in this country and America such successful efforts are being made to familiarize young people with the beauties and wonders of natural objects. But it would seem that we have much to learn in this direction, as in so many others, from American educators. Mr. Long's book will prove nothing short of fascinating to those boys and girls who are fortunate enough to get hold of it. After reading his twenty-six short pages on "Fox-Ways," to take only one example, one's ideas concerning Reynard undergo a complete change. Even if we continue to regard him as sly and not aboveboard in all his actions, a profound respect for his marvelous resourcefulness and quiet, gentlemanly way of carrying out his somewhat shady designs is sure to result from an acquaintance with his biography as written by Mr. Long. Speaking personally, the consequence of our introduction by this author to the crows and the hornet (despite its love for strong drink) is that we have developed a human interest in both of them, — Mr. Long makes them appear so much like ordinary mortals.



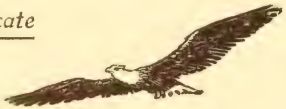


From *The Boston Advertiser*, July 20, 1903

THE author's name is a guarantee of quality for this series of animal studies, — the book of the deer. Despite the strictures of very critical critics, his studies of beasts of the field and fowls of the air are generally accepted as the testimony of a keen veteran, rarely endowed with capacity to convey from his printed page the wood spell felt by every wanderer in the forest.

In this little volume, strongly illustrated by Charles Copeland, he tells the story of his first deer hunt in the Maine woods, when he learned to appreciate the cunning and splendid courage of the buck, and the treasured lesson of a dewdrop splashed from a leaf at daybreak; the testimony of crushed flower, broken brake, or bended grass blade, and the counsel of birch bark with a shred of deer velvet clinging to it.

From *The Christian Advocate*



THESE books are, in our judgment, by far the best animal books which have yet appeared. . . . From cover to cover they are packed with incident and keen observation and the curious ways of bird and beast.

Only a deep love of nature and a lifelong training could produce such a book. The author is full of his subject to his finger tips. Whether calling the chickadees among the pines of a New England farm, or calling bull moose in the heart of a Canada forest, the writer is among his own people. He knows the wood folk, and they evidently know him. He is a naturalist, hunter, poet, nature lover, all in one. His descriptions are

marvels of terse, vivid English. Now you are watching with him by moonlight, deep in the wilderness; now catching your breath at a daring experiment, or a touch of hairbreadth adventure which reveals the man's absolute fearlessness; and again finding your eyes moist with sudden sympathy at Merganser's devotion to her little ones. And all this is told with the most charming simplicity and directness, as if he were doing the most natural thing in the world in being in the wilderness alone at midnight, or splashing an enraged moose, or freezing at a beaver hole, or just sitting still an hour to find out what his beloved wood folk are doing.

From *Public Opinion*, July 9, 1903

WE take this opportunity of reaffirming our belief in the correctness of Mr. Long's theories and of again advising the study of this author's work.

From *The Independent*, December 18, 1902

IN his "School of the Woods" Mr. William J. Long has given us a sympathetic study of animal life. His observations, as recorded in his happily named volume, have shown him that wild animals teach their young the simple arts, if we may use such a term, whereby they become fitted to live after the fashion of their kind. . . . The glimpses of animal life in Mr. Long's book cover a wide range, and are indicative of the most careful observation, not only of our common birds and fishes but also of the wood and forest animals.

A LETTER FROM MR. LONG

In a personal letter regarding the controversy with Mr. Burroughs many interesting truths were told by Mr. Long, and his position was possibly more strongly expressed than it has been in the published articles. Mr. Long has given his permission to reproduce the personal letter sent to the editor of the "Connecticut Magazine" directly following Mr. Burroughs' attack.

I THANK you heartily for the kindly spirit of your letter and editorial (see page 2) and for the courtesy which submits the latter to me before publication. I could wish that your contemporary, which first published Mr. Burroughs' attack, had been governed by a like courtesy and consideration.

Mr. Burroughs falls into a very natural mistake in his criticism, — the mistake of a man who assumes final authority in a matter of which he has not sufficient knowledge. I say this advisedly; for, notwithstanding Mr. Burroughs' observations on the farm, and his nature book, which I read with delight and to which I give full measure of praise, all our animals and birds differ widely in habits and intelligence, and no man has sufficient knowledge of any class of animals to affirm or deny absolutely what other animals of the same class will do in a different locality under different circumstances. Curiously enough his mistake and spirit are precisely those of the New England theologians following Calvin's good example. They discovered a certain amount of truth undoubtedly. Then they built a fence around it; called it a creed; limited the divine wisdom and ordination to their own small horizon; and sent all those to endless

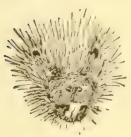
perdition who dared to see the truth differently and without the fences.

One expects more freedom in nature than in theology; but, spite your eyes and experience, to set an intelligent animal down as a creature of mere habit and instinct — instinct that has no increase, and habit that knows no modification — and to limit what the bear can do in Canada by what one has seen the rabbit do in West Park, that surely is a bondage of the letter such as Edwards never approached. . . .

Unfortunately this is not the first time that Mr. Burroughs has expressed himself in print with less courtesy and accuracy than we could wish to see. Some of us remember his controversy anent the classics

with Maurice Thompson, a gentleman, a scholar, and a rare naturalist. But to pass over that in which the personal element entered too strongly and in which knowledge on one side found itself opposed to dogmatism on the other, I recall his cutting criticism of Lowell and Bryant in *Scribner's Monthly* (December, 1879). For instance — and this is but one of many points — he criticised Lowell for having buttercups and dandelions bloom freely together, a thing to be seen in a hundred meadows. As it turned out he had never seen and did not even know the species of buttercup that grows here. In the *Atlantic Monthly* (March, 1880), Thomas Wentworth Higginson showed the extreme inaccuracy and arrogance of this whole criticism. . . .

The black bear of Florida differs widely in habits from his brother of the Mississippi cane swamps, and still more widely in habits and disposition from the animal of the Canada wilderness. The panther of Colorado is afraid of the smallest of dogs; the panther of northern New Hampshire and the Adirondacks will kill the biggest of them without provocation. The salmon of the east coast tastes no food for months after entering fresh water; the salmon of the west coast is a voracious feeder. For thirty years I have heard the robin's song — every note and variation of it. Yet last summer in the Maine woods Mr. Pearl Young, a well-known guide, and myself spent an hour trying to find a rare wild singer that neither of us had ever heard before; and when we found him he was a common robin.



Mr. Burroughs denies that a porcupine ever rolls himself into a ball. That may possibly be true of the porcupines that he has seen. Here the porcupine has no longer any natural enemies that he is afraid of, and there is no need of the habit. In the wilderness I have found them when I had to poke them with a stick, so closely were they rolled, before I was sure

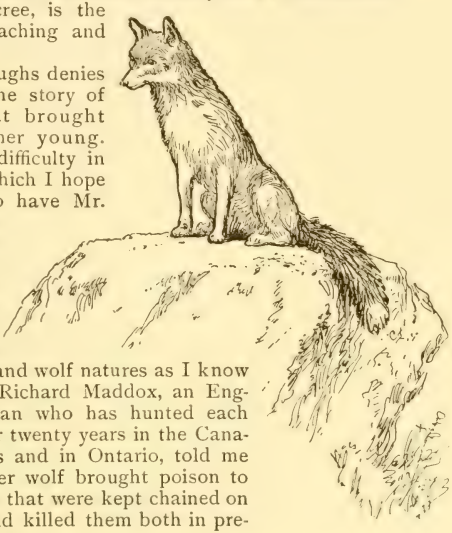
where the head and tail were. Neglect of this habit cost the life of one porcupine that I have seen. It was in deep, soft snow. A fisher attacked the porcupine, which struck his head against a log and kept his tail flat to the ground, ready to strike. The fisher tunneled deep in the snow, passed under the tail and body of the porcupine, stuck his head out of the snow under the porcupine's throat, gripped him, and killed him without receiving a single barb.

Mr. Burroughs will call this a lie because he has not seen it. Fortunately Mr. Young, the guide referred to, once saw the same thing in a different locality.

The critic accuses Mr. Seton of deliberate falsehood and misrepresentation. While I differ radically from Mr. Seton in many of his observations and theories of animals, my notes, covering a period of twenty years of close watching of animals, bear out some of the things which Mr. Burroughs assures us are pure inventions. The fox, for instance, that deliberately led the hounds in front of a train is ridiculed as a piece of pure absurdity. Yet two dogs of mine were killed by the same fox in this way at different times, and a third in a way much more remarkable. There was also a fox in West Upton, Mass., in the winters of 1887–1890 that would play around the hills until he heard the hoot of a distant train, when he would lead the hounds straight for the railroad tracks. He succeeded in killing one of them, at least, to my own knowledge.

Mr. Burroughs is quite as far astray about the fox in many other particulars. He claims that a fox knows a trap by inherited knowledge. Now a fox is like a caribou in that he believes only his nose. When he avoids a trap it is not because he knows it is a man's invention, but for exactly the opposite reason, namely, that it has a smell on it that he does not know. Put the same trap in shallow running water to take away the unknown smell, put a bit of green moss from a stone upon it, and a

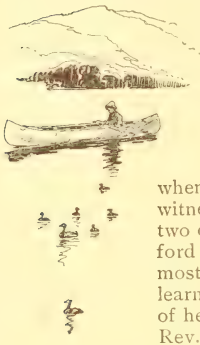
fox will put his foot into it without a question. He claims also that a fox in the wilderness knows as much as in a settled community. That must be *a priori* knowledge, for he has certainly never tried the wilderness fox. Personally, I have trapped foxes in both places and I have invariably found that the wilderness fox is an innocent when compared with his brother of the settlements. And this, contrary to Mr. Burroughs' absolute decree, is the result of teaching and experience.



Mr. Burroughs denies absolutely the story of the fox that brought poison to her young. There is a difficulty in that story which I hope some day to have Mr. Seton explain; but Mr. Burroughs does not discover it. Yet most of it is true to both fox and wolf natures as I know them. Mr. Richard Maddox, an English gentleman who has hunted each year for over twenty years in the Canadian Rockies and in Ontario, told me that a mother wolf brought poison to her two cubs that were kept chained on his ranch and killed them both in precisely this way.

Mr. Burroughs treats my own books, and especially my "School of the Woods," with even less courtesy. He denies the facts absolutely because he has not seen them on his farm, and therefore they cannot be true. He also denies the theories. There is absolutely no such thing as an animal teaching her young — "there is nothing in the dealings of an animal with her young that in the remotest way suggests human instruction."

Teaching is not primarily instruction, by the way. It is not giving something new to the young animal or boy, but rather an inducement bringing out what is already in him. This is the theory of all good teachers from Froebel to the Boston supervisors. But let that pass. How any man could watch the mother birds and animals for a single season, to say nothing of fifty years, and write that statement passes my comprehension. In my notes are a hundred instances to deny it (and my notes were not intended to be published when they were written), but, lest my own witness should be cast out, let me bring in two others on a single subject. Anna Botsford Comstock, who is one of our best and most careful naturalists, tells of a cat that learned to open a door, and taught two out of her litter of kittens to do the same thing. Rev. Magee Pratt of Hartford, formerly literary editor of the *Connecticut Magazine*, who is an authority on horticulture, had a cat that learned from a dog to sit up on her hind legs and beg food. She taught four out of five kittens to do the same thing. I could quote a hundred other instances, in both wild and domestic animals, and show the same thing.



Mr. Burroughs' whole argument in this connection misses the point altogether. He tells us what animals do by instinct (though he is vastly mistaken in saying that young birds build their nests as well as old ones) and says simply that this is enough. "School of the Woods" does not deny instinct, — I have watched the ant and the bee and the water spider too long for that, — it shows, and conclusively I think, that instinct is not enough. For an animal's knowledge is, like our own, the result of three factors: instinct, training, and experience. Instinct

begins the work (for the lower orders this is enough), the mother's training develops and supplements the instinct, and contact with the world finishes the process.

"A wild animal is a wild animal as soon as it is born, and it fears man and its natural enemies as soon as its senses are developed," he writes. But all our domestic animals were wild yesterday; how, then, are they now tame? Young fawns when found in the woods just after birth have no fear of man; how does fear come? The Arctic animals had no fear of the first explorers; now they are wild; whence this change? Here are two animals, an otter and a fisher; both belong to the weasel family, and in a general way are alike. The first is gentle and harmless to all animals; the second is a savage and persistent hunter. Now, without the mother's influence and teaching how shall the young grouse know, as they soon do know, which of these animals to avoid and which to ignore?

Again he says, "Let a domestic cat rear its kittens in the woods and they are at once wild animals." That depends entirely on the cat. Let a motherly old tabby drop her kittens anywhere, and at your approach she will rub against your legs, and the kittens will be like her. Let a half-starved wild creature drop her kittens in the same spot, and she will fight at your approach, and the kittens will show the same wildness.

Not only have I watched these animals myself, but I have taken infinite pains to compare my observations not with the books but with the experience of trappers and Indians who know far more of animal ways than the books have ever provided; and I have heard from old Indians whose lives have been spent in the woods, stories of animal cunning and intelligence beside which my own small observations seem very tame and commonplace.

You know the wonderful things that your own particular dog will do? That is not because he is more intelligent than all other dogs, but simply because you have watched him more and know him better. You would find much more wonderful things of the wolf and fox could you but watch them with the same thoroughness and sympathy. For these wild animals are not spoiled by men; and they are in every way more cunning and individual animals.

Your editorial is quite right when it intimates that I may by further observation modify my theories of animal education and psychology. That is what I am doing all the time. Meanwhile the facts remain as I have recorded them, and every modification must be the result of more facts. And I shall probably continue to watch animals for myself and believe my own eyes and ears rather than listen to the voice of authority in these matters; for otherwise of what use is it either to watch or write?

With kindest regards, very sincerely yours,

W. J. Long, Stamford, Conn.

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